THE ATTITUDE OF ISLAM TOWARDS SCIENCE AND PHILOSOPHY

A Translation of

IBN RUSHD'S (Averroës)

Famous Treatise

FASLUL-AL-MAQAL

Translators

Dr. HAMID NASEEM RAFIABADI

TRANSLATION OF *FASL-AL-MAQAL*

The greatest Jurist and the Chief of Justice, (*Faqiyah ajal allama sadr kabir qazi aadal*) Abu Walid Muhammad bin Ahmad bin Muhammad bin Ahmad bin Rushd (may Allah be pleased with him) has said:

All praises are especially reserved only for Allah, and benedictions and salutations of Allah (*daruud* and *salat wa salaams*) are for Allah's chosen and beloved servant and prophet, Muhammad (SAW). This decisive assertion is made, as our aim is the research about what is the commandment regarding philosophy and the fields of logic from the point of view of the Divine law (*Shariah*)? Whether these fields of knowledge (*Uloom*) are permissible or perilous (*mahduur*) i.e. does Divine law look at them as being only recommendatory or obligatory?

We (indicating Ibn Rushd) say if the real aim and purpose of philosophy is that we can contemplate and view the existing things (*Mojudaat*) through it, from the point that these existing things point out and work as an indication (*Dalalat*) about the Creator, by way of the style of the creations which are patterned (*Masnuaat*); (this is so) as creations always shed light on the Creator.1/.

In this case when the knowledge of the creations will be complete, the knowledge of the Creator, the author of nature (*Sanah*) is also supposed to be perfect. Then, in

other words we have every right to say that the Divine law has also commanded us to contemplate and view the existing things and has laid emphasis on this point, notwithstanding the fact that the nature of this contemplation may be regarded as of the status of obligation (*Wajoob*) or it may be cosidered just as recommendatory (*Mandub ilahi*). However, there is no doubt that Divine law has invited us and has exhorted us to view existing things and natural phenomenon, and also to fully utilize our minds to grasp its subtle knowledge. Accordingly, Allah in several verses of the Quran has instructed humans: -

"Thus, be warned O people who have eyes"...*(59:2)*

This verse (*ayah*) denotes that the believers and people of insight should use analogy based both on rationalism (reason) and Divine law (*Shariah*) for this purpose. Similarly, Allah says

"Have not these people seen the kingdom of the earth and the heaven, and those things which Allah has created". "(7:185)

Not only does this verse lay stress on viewing all the existing things from the viewpoint of admonition but also considers this process obligatory. And Allah knows much better who are the custodians of this knowledge as alluded to in this verse. Some instances in this regard have also been given. For example, the Quran mentions that in this knowledge Allah honoured Prophet Ibrahim (AS) and in this regard Allah says: -

"And in this way I made Ibrahim observe the kingdom of earth and the skies". ..."(6:75)

Allah says, while exhorting others to have a portion from this knowledge:

"Do not these people look at the camel and see how I have created it and don't they look at the sky to see how I have raised it"...(86:11)

And says

"And these people contemplate the creation of the earth and skies" (2:191)

And there are similar numerous verses which occur in this regard, fairly explaining this point.

Therefore, we come to know that the Divine law has supported and ordained, in a clear decree, the use of mind in observing and viewing the existing things (*Mojudaat*) and taking lessons and learning from them. We know in this way that we can infer the unknown from the known, or in other words to reach from the phenomenon to the unknown (nomena) or the lesser known (*Majhool*) realms of knowledge through inference (*istanbat*). This is called analogy (*Qiyaas*). From all this it becomes obligatory for us to use the logical analogy (*Qiyaas-i- Aqli*) to study the existing things (*Mojudaat*) and look at them with the purpose of admonition (or getting warnings). By this, the careful vision (*Nazar*) which has been prompted by the Divine law is considered to be a complete sort (*Nau*) of the types of vision (*Anuai Nazar*) or of the analogy (*Qiyaas*) which is called demonstration (*Burhan*). 2/.

In this way the Divine law has emphatically invited us to the knowledge and gnosis (*Marifat*) of Allah and His existing things (*Maujudat*) through demonstration (*Burhan*). The question which arises here is that in which category should we put the understanding of the knowledge of Allah, the Exalted, (*Tabarak-ta'ala*) and His existing things (*Maujudat*) through the medium of reason (*Burhan*)? Secondly what is the status of such activity, i.e. whether it is just good (*afzal*) or a matter of obligatory nature (*al-amr–al-zaruri*) or does it have the status of an important and obligatory command. However, it is incumbent upon anyone, who wants to demonstratively have the knowledge of Allah, the Exalted and all the other existents, to have first understood the nature, types and kinds of demonstration, and the conditions and boundaries of demonstration. Moreover, the knowledge

about the opposition between Demonstrative Analogy (*al-Qiyas-al-Burhani*), Dialectical Analogy (*al-Qiyas al- Jadali*), Rhetorical Analogy (*al -Qiyas al-Khitabi*) and the Sophistical Analogy (*al-Qiyas –al-Mughalati*) is also a prerequisite for such a person. But before this, he has to know the ingredients and varieties or the details (*ajza*) of analogy i.e. the premises, types and kinds of analogy.

For a believer, therefore, the prior knowledge of these matters is necessary, as these constitute the same status in theoretical studies, as instruments have in practical activities. We can understand its example from the practice of a jurist who extracts commandments by doing *tafaquh* 3/ in the *ahkam* 4/, by including what is relevant in it and thereby excluding what is not relevant in it.

Or in other words we can say that Just as it is necessary for the jurist to infer from the Divine command to him to acquire knowledge by taking into consideration (*tafaquh*) the legal commandments on the basis of juristic analogies or syllogisms with their various kinds and valid and invalid conditions, in the same way for the seeker of the knowledge of Allah it is necessary to infer from the matters related to it by giving a ponderous attention and observing the existing things, which warrant the obligatory nature of this metaphysical reasoning. He (the seeker of the knowledge of Allah) has rather a greater claim to rational Analogy and its various conditions than the jurist, since the jurist argues in favour of the necessity of legal analogy (*al-Qiyas –al- Faqihi*) from the saying of Allah: "Wherefore take example *from them* O you who have eyes" [Quran 2:59], a seeker of divine knowledge (*aarif*) has a better right to establish the same from it on behalf of metaphysical rational analogy (*al-Qiyas al-Aqli*).

Regarding the question, which any inquirer may raise that since the Rational Analogy (*al-Qiyas al-Aqli*) was not found in the early days of Islam (*Sadr-i-Awal*), isn't it (i.e., its practice), therefore an innovation? In response to this

question it can be said that even legal analogy (*al-Qiyas-al- Faqihi*) was not found during the early days of Islam, however, no one considers this science as innovation. Therefore, in the same way we should approach the observation of Rational analogy (*al-Qiyas al-aqli*). 5/

There is a reason for this opinion, but it is not the occasion to mention that here. However, most of the people amongst the Muslim community approve of the Rational Analogy except a small minority (who are) from amongst the gross literalists and who are actually disputing this position on the basis of religious ordinances (*al-Nasus*). 6/

When it has been established that the Divine law has made seeking of rational analogy and its various kinds obligatory for us as it has been done in the case of legal analogy; in that case if none of our predecessors has made an effort to enquire into it we should start doing it from the beginning with the successor taking help from the predecessor, until the knowledge is completed. However, it is very difficult, rather impossible that an individual may single handedly acquire this science (of legal reasoning) with all (associated) aspects which are to be known necessarily (in legal reasoning). In the case of rational analogy this task is even more difficult. Therefore, if any person has done some prominent work in this field we should use it to our advantage even if he is from some other religion than ours; for the instrument by which purification is perfected is not made uncertain in its usefulness by its being in the hands of one of our own party, or of a foreigner, if it possesses the qualities of truthfulness and validity (*sahat*). Thus if the conditions of validity are present then we can use that instrument which anticipates right catharsis even though this instrument has been proposed by some people among the ancients, who are not included in the Muslim community, but have taken lead on us in this anticipation.

We see that the ancients have to a great degree used research in this regard. Thus it becomes important for us that we should rush towards their books and peruse and study them so that we should know what these people have written. If all the propositions and issues which they have written are not correct then we should be cautious and should not trust them.7/

So, when we are discharged and free from this operation and are successful in acquainting ourselves with those instruments by which we can look at existing things with an objective of taking instruction and lesson with expertise, the necessary result of which will be that we can also acquire command on the demonstrative knowledge of the creation (*Dalalat-i—San'at*). This is the fact of the matter that whosoever cannot know creation (*San'at*) cannot know its design (*Mozuu*). It becomes an obligation on us that we should research existing things in a proper order, by which we can infer the knowledge of the design of the world (*sanat*). Similarly, we can look at existing things one by one to help acquire their knowledge. In this regard, as already mentioned, we can take the assistance of ancient philosophers and wise men (*Falasifah wa Hukama*), because they have taken the lead on us in this work regarding the acquisition and compilation of this knowledge and its branches (*Uloom*).

We can understand this problem (*Masalah*) by means of a few examples. For example, certain people till today used to consider the art (*Sanat*) of numerals 8/ extinct but a person taking into consideration the inquiry into this science gets convinced about its existence. Similar is the example of knowledge of astronomy where it has become possible now to understand the patterns (*maqadir*) of heavenly bodies. If it is possible to determine the size and directions (*Maqadir wa Jahtun*) of heavenly bodies and their shapes and various directions (*Bad-al-Ibad*), it will be very beneficial and advantageous. This is possible in

such a manner that we should attempt to know the distance between the sun and the earth and the distance of the stars provided the person who accomplishes this work should be temperamentally more ingenious and perceptive than their counter parts or should have benefited (*Mustafeez*) from any part of revelation or likeness of revelation.

If such a person would claim that the sun is 150-160 times larger than the earth, then certain people would attribute this assertion to the lunacy of the person, though this issue has been established on the basis of science of astronomy and there is no doubt in the truth and validity of this science. It is irrelevant that the bearer of this science may be any one .We can understand the acquisition and development of these branches of knowledge (*uloom*) by observing that the attainment and expertise in the principles of divine law (*asool-i-fiqah*) could also be completed after a long duration .9/

In this regard today's man can go ahead with the satisfaction of heart in terms of those problems (*Masail*) whose conclusion and deduction has been derived by the followers of other religions especially in the issues of polemics and dialectics (*Manazire*). Although there are exceptions as the People of the western region of larger Islamic cities are worthy (or someone else) show solicitude and exertion regarding these issues, from the point of view of knowledge. But we see that regarding this issue people work with an air of negligence and they do not have command over craftsmanship and skill of knowledge (*Ilmi Sanat wa Hirafat*). When the state of the themes of knowledge is such, then how can we be conversant with the terms of craftsmanship of creator, the knowledge of which is called wisdom (*Hikmat*)?

In this state of affairs it is important for us to benefit from experiences of those who have lived before us and have looked at existing things from the point of view of

research and have obtained it. And we should, by showing favour towards conditions of reason try to find the interpretation of truth and reality (*Haq wa Sawab*) in the proven points in the books of the ancients and we should express gladness at this and be thankful to them. But regarding the interpretations which don't appear consonant with truth (*Haq*) for us, we should be warned about them and we should abstain (*Hazar*) from them, and in this connection we should excuse ourselves from these because of lack of acceptance (*Adm- i- Qabuliyat).*

By this it is obviously clear that to consider the books of ancients as worthy of attention is also obligatory from the point of Divine law provided that the essence, spirit and the purpose of these books is such on which the Divine law has laid stress. And now if some person stops us from things in which acumen of nature (*Zakawat*), equity of divine law and learning a subject of importance of knowledge and creation (*Fazilat-i-Ilmiat wa Khalqiyah*) are accumulated, then that person has stopped people from that work towards which the Divine law has invited them i.e. towards the knowledge of Allah as is the right of knowing Him and, that will be the extreme ignorance on his part and going astray from Allah, the most Exalted.

Or in other words we can say that if someone goes astray in the observation of Him or a person has lost his orientation owing to his Nature, because of his wrong observation or a deficiency in his natural capacity, or being dominated by his passions, or not finding a teacher to guide him to an understanding of their contents, or a combination of all or more than one of these causes. It does not follow that one should forbid observation to anyone who is qualified to it, and the manner of harm which arises owing to it (those circumstances) is something which is attached to it by accident and not by essence; and when a thing is beneficial by its nature and essence, we should desist from shunning it because of

something harmful contained in it by accident. After the nomination (*Taqarur*) of this thing, when we have the belief that all Muslims consider Islamic law as Allah's law and this law is based on truth, this law has invited us to infer the knowledge of Allah and to look at His creation for the purpose of instruction. This task of verifying these affairs as per his instinct, nature and need of his disposition is important for every Muslim. But the truth is that in the practice of this verification, the dispositions of people are based on different degrees, and (the people) have preferences over one another in certain matters.

Certain dispositions verify only on the basis of demonstration (*Burhan*), while other dispositions verify only on the basis of dialectical verbal statements (*Tasdeeq-al-Jadliyah*). Certain people are impressed by the rhetorical style of speaking (*Al-Aqwal-al-Khitabiyah*) and among them are some that verify the maxims of oratory as the men of reason verify the statements of reason.

Thus, since this divine religion of ours has summoned people by these three methods, assent to it has extended to everyone, except him who stubbornly denies it with his tongue, or him for whom no method of summons to Allah, the Exalted, has been appointed in religion owing to his own neglect of such matters. It was for this purpose that the Prophet (Saw) was sent with a special mission to 'the white man and the black man' alike; I mean because his religion embraces all the methods of summons to Allah, the Exalted. This is clearly expressed in the saying of Allah, the Exalted, and 'Summon to the way of your Lord by wisdom and by good preaching, and debate with them in the most effective manner'.

Probably this is the reason that Muhammad, Messenger of Allah has used different invitational procedures for blacks and whites for affirmation of the Divine law. This was the thought of the Prophet (Saw) on the occasion when he ordered a man to give his brother

honey to drink for his diarrhoea, and the diarrhoea increased after he had given him the honey: when the man complained to him about it, he said, ' Allah spoke the truth; it was your brother's stomach that lied'. Allah's evident assertion of this thing clarifies it:

"Invite the people towards your Lord's way with wisdom and with excellent council. And contend with them in the best way".

When these divine laws are proved, being a part of the Muslim body, we are aware of the fact in a clear cut manner that the demonstrative observation (*al—Nazaru-al-Burhani*) will not contradict what has already been proven by *Shariah*, as truth does not contradict truth but would affirm and rather confirm it. And in addition to this it will be in the forefront as a witness to its validity.

In this way if the demonstrative observation leads to any manner of knowledge about any existent that is inevitably either unmentioned or mentioned in *Shariah*. If it is unmentioned there is no contradiction, its status will be of those categories which are not mentioned in the commandments (*Al-Ahkam*), so that the jurist (*Faqih*) has to infer it by employing *Shariah* Analogy (*Al-Qiyas-Al –Shariahi*). But in the event the *Shariah* has pronounced about it; the apparent meaning of the words inevitably either accords or conflicts with the conclusions of demonstration about it. In the former case, there is no argument. But if the case is that it contradicts with the demonstrative observation, it will warrant an interpretation (*Tawil*). The purport of interpretation is application of the indication and significance of an expression from real (*Al-Dalalatul-Haqeeqiah*) to metaphorical indication and significance (*Al-Dalalatul-al-Majaziah*), without forsaking therein the standard metaphorical practices of Arabic, such as calling a thing by the name of something having similitude and resemblance to it or a cause or consequence or

accompaniment of it, or other things such as are enumerated in accounts of the kinds of metaphorical speech.12/

The problem is when the jurists (*Fuqaha*) in many divine commands demonstrate this course of action, and then the scholar who is perpetrating this course through reason is more entitled to it. This is so because to the jurist (*Faqih*) belongs just the Analogy of conjecture (*Qiyas Zanni*) and in its comparison to the seeker of rational interpretation belongs the Analogy of Certitude (*Qiyas Yaqeeni*). 13/

We are trying to absolutely establish that the thing towards which demonstration and reason direct us and Divne law apparently law opposes it, the interpretation (at that instance) will be made on the basis of linguistic principles of Arabic language. There is no conflict on the subject and no Muslim has any doubt about it or any believer has any suspicion (*Irtiyab*). After coming in terms with this reality, our belief about this issue is further strengthened (so) that like this we should try to combine the extra religious reasonable (*Maqul*) and the reported testimonial statement (*Manqul*) even when apparently at times, we find some discrepancy between the statements of Divine law and rational propositions (*Maqul Qaziyat*). Indeed we may say that whenever a statement in the Divine law conflicts in its apparent meaning with a demonstrative argument (*Burhan*), if the purport of *Shariah* is considered carefully and the rest of its contents searched minutely, there will invariably be found among the expressions of Divine law something which in its apparent meaning bears witness to that interpretation or comes close to bearing witness.14/

This view holds on the consensus of Muslims that divine word cannot always be made applicable for its apparent meanings or necessarily on the basis of interpretation. And neither is its evident meaning

absolved of its external (apparent) meaning on the grounds of interpretation. However, they have difference of opinion over which of them is interpretable (*al-Ma'ual*) from what is non-interpretable (*ghayr ma'ual*) from them. The Ash'arites for instance give an allegorical interpretation to the verse about Allah's settling on the Throne (*istawa*) and the Tradition about His descent, while the *Hanbalites* take them on evident meaning, the reason being the consideration of evident facts. The reason as to why double meaning has been given is to suit the diversified observations of the people and the differences of their natural dispositions (*Qaraihim*) in order to reach any judgment (*Tasdeeq*). The apparent contradictions are meant to stimulate the people who are well-grounded in knowledge (*Rasikhoon –Fil- Ilm*) to a comprehensive interpretation which may reconcile both. 15/

(Someone's saying is) that in the Divine law there are certain things about which the consensus of Muslims is that the meaning is dependent on the apparent meaning, and there are certain matters which will need to be elucidated (with inner meaning). And there are some things where contradiction has taken place which means reason also directs us towards the interpretation over which people have based the apparent meaning to have reached a consensus 'indicating both an apparent meaning and a deeper meaning'. One opinion is that in this condition if the consensus has been assured, then it would be right to do so. Now if the consensus is of the conjectural kind then it is lawful. Because of this reason Abu Hamid, Abul Mali, etc, the proponents of Theoretical Science are of the opinion that we cannot charge a person with blasphemy who in this type of examples does not agree with the consensus. This matter has become explicit for you that in theory consensus cannot be assured completely as in the case of practical matters (where its assurance is possible). In the affairs of world any

consensus (to be held) is not possible till that time when we can completely enclose boundaries to the circumstances of the world. For this, it becomes necessary that the present scholars of the whole world, who are famous amongst us, are available and we are fully aware of their personalities as well as their strength. In this way we find the problems of religion with consistency, and all the records of its affairs. Besides all this too, the complete surety of this matter is possible and that the scholars of this world stand grounded on this as in the Divine law doesn't differentiate between the inside and outside (*Zahir wa batin*). And science does not require any problem to be hidden from any person and the matter that in the Divine law there is present only one way for people should also be known. But contrary to that, it has been reported from the people of early generations (*Sadar Awal*) that they believed that there are two parts of Divine law. They are of the same opinion that it is not necessary for any person to know the actual fact if he is not included among the scholars. Like in the Bukhari, Hazrat Ali narrates that the Prophet (SAW) has said :—

> 'Speak to people about the matters that they know. Otherwise the outcome will be that they might disapprove the presence of Allah and the Prophet (SAW)'.

A body of ancient people has narrated similar ideology. Then from any problematic outlook how can an idea of consensus be 'obtained'? Because we as people are well aware of the matter that any age would not have been without such people who are convinced of the idea that in the divine law there are certain things whose elucidation is necessary for people. This affair (thought) is in contradiction to the religious affairs because people consider its disclosure and expression equal for all the people. And in these affairs (of practice) the attainment of consensus is quite easy. This is the reason that in this

process there is no possibility of disagreement. (While as) in the case of religious affairs attainment of consensus is enough.

(And if you say so) that in the process of interpretation when consensus is broken, doesn't it justify the charge of infidelity (on the consensus breakers)? When in such affairs the occurrence of consensus cannot be imagined then what will be your opinion about these philosophers of Islam like Abu Nasar (Al-Farabi) and Ibn Sina etc. Abu Hamid (Al-Ghazzali) in his well renowned book *'Tahafat-ul-Falasifah'* has decreed these two gentlemen as unbelievers (*Kafir)* because of their beliefs that the world is eternal and Allah doesn't hold the knowledge of all the particulars, and the resurrection of bodies and about the state of the afterlife, in which cases they have reached a different interpretation. We say that in its external assertion this belief is not tantamount to blasphemy (in these two cases). 16/

While Imam Ghazzali in another of his books *'Altafruqa'* with specification has insisted on this issue that in these affairs, there is possibility of infidelity in the breaking of consensus. But as we believe that in these types of problems it is difficult for consensus to take place as even a good number of people from the earlier generations have maintained this position in this matter. These are such interpretations that cannot be illustrated further, otherwise these are the very people who are fit for this work. These people of interpretations are called *'Raskhun Fil*-al-*i!m'* because our choice and option in reality is dependent on Allah's affirmation, 'He it is who has sent down to you the Book, containing certain verses clear and definite' [and so on] down to the words 'those who are well grounded in science'.

The light of judgment and acceptance will not be so superior *(maziyatun)* when the people of knowledge don't have the knowledge of interpretation because their belief

should be altogether different from those who are not knowledgeable. Allah has surely qualified them that they possess faith of them (allegorical verses) not from the angle of demonstration. But when about this belief it is specifically mentioned by Allah that its proponents are scholars then it must but be based on demonstration and in that case is bound to be not without the knowledge of interpretation (*tawil*) because Allah, the most Exalted, has informed that interpretation (*tawil*) is present, which is the reality (*al-Haqqeeqat*); and demonstration (*burhan*) is nothing but always based on reality. When the situation is such, there is no possibility of consensus beneficial (*mustafaz*) in the interpretations, with which Allah has attributed the scholars to be endowed with. This matter is quite clear for a person who is just.

And this status of man cannot be attained without the know how of interpretation besides (possession of) knowledge. Now among the believers (those) who are not knowledgeable but believe in this matter, for them in this process it is not necessary for the faith to be dependent on argument. Now if the faith is like that which Allah has attributed to special scholars then its existence along with argument is obligatory. 17/

Due to all these reasons we see that Abul Hamid (Al Ghazzali) in the affairs of Peripatetics has accused that when this matter is attributed to them, these people deny that Allah has the knowledge of the particulars, in fact these people in this matter are upholders of this opinion that Allah has knowledge of them which is not similar to our knowledge. Whereas Glorious God's Knowledge of existence is the opposite of this: it is the cause of the object known, which is the existent being. Thus to suppose the two kinds of knowledge similar to each other is to identify the essences and properties of opposite things, and that is the extreme of ignorance. Our knowledge of them (on the other hand) is effect for the object known. And if the

name of 'knowledge' is predicated of both originated and eternal knowledge, it is predicated by pure homonymy, as many names are predicated of opposite things: e.g. *jalal* of great and small, *sarim* of light and darkness. Thus there exists no definition embracing both kinds of knowledge at once, as the theologians of our time imagine. We have devoted a separate essay to this question, impelled by one of our friends.

But how can anyone imagine that the Peripatetics say that Allah, the Glorious does not know particulars with His eternal Knowledge, when they hold that true visions include premonitions of particular events that are due to occur in future time, and that this warning foreknowledge comes to people in their sleep from the eternal Knowledge which orders and rules the universe? Moreover, it is not only particulars which they say Allah does not know in the manner in which we know them, but universals as well; for the universals known to us are also effects of the nature of existent being, while with His Knowledge the reverse is true. Thus the conclusion to which demonstration leads is that His Knowledge transcends qualification as 'universal' or 'particular'. Consequently there is no point in disputing about this question, i.e. whether to call them unbelievers or not. Now if any person, among these two types of sciences first draws similarity between them, then contrasts and unifies their qualities, (he) will be at the height of ignorance. When the knowledge will be used for the knowledge of the created and the ancient, then it will be concerning the question whether the world is pre-eternal or (it) came into existence. The disagreement between the Asharite theologians and the ancient philosophers, especially in the case of certain earlier philosophers, is almost resolvable into a disagreement about naming (*tasmiah*), for they agree that there are three kinds of existents: two extremes and one intermediate between the extremes.

They also agree about naming (*tasmiah*) the extremes; but they disagree about the intermediate class. 18/

One extreme is a thing, which is brought into existence from something other than itself (from some matter), and by something (by an efficient cause); and it (its existence) is preceded by time. This is the status of existents whose generation is apprehended by sense (*hiss*), e.g. the formation of water, air, earth, animals, plants, and so on. About this type of existents all the earlier (philosophers) and Ash'arites, agree in naming this class of existents (*Maujudat*) as 'originated' (*muhaddith*). The opposite extreme to this is an existent that is not made from or by anything, and not preceded by time; and here too all the opposite parties both agree in naming it 'pre-eternal' (*al-Qadeem*). This existent is apprehended by demonstration; it is Allah, Exalted and Sacred, Who is the Maker, provider of existence to all, and Sustainer of the universe; may He be praised and His Power exalted! 19/

This is the world as a whole. Now they all agree on the presence of these three characters in the world. For the theologians admit that time does not precede it, or rather this is a necessary consequence for them since time according to them is something which accompanies (*maqaran*) movements and bodies. They also agree with the earlier (philosophers) in the view that future time is infinite (*ghayr mutnahi*) and in the same way the future is existent.

However, the disagreement among them is about past time (*al-Zaman-al- Mazi*) and past existent (*al-Maujud al-Mazi*): the scholastics maintain that it is finite (*mutnahi*) as Plato and his group of followers uphold this doctrine, while Aristotle and his group hold that it is infinite, as is the case with future time. Thus it is clear that this last existent bears a resemblance both to the existent which is really created (*muhaddith*) and to the pre-eternal Existent

(*Qadeem*). So, those who are more impressed with its similitude to the pre-eternal than its similitude to the created name it 'pre-eternal', while those who are more impressed with its similitude to the created, name it as 'originated' (*al -Muhaddith*). But in truth it is neither really originated nor really pre-eternal, since the really originated is necessarily perishable and the really pre-eternal has no cause. Some others like Plato and his followers-name it 'originated and coeval with time', because time according to them is finite in the past.

Thus the doctrines about the world are not so very far apart from each other that some of them should be called irreligious and others not. For this to happen, opinions must be divergent in the extreme, i.e. contraries, such as the scholastics suppose exist on this question; i.e. [they believe] that the names 'pre-eternity' and 'coming into existence' as applied to the world as a whole are contraries. But it is now clear from what we have said that this is not the case.20/

Over and above all this, these opinions (*ara*) about the world do not conform to the apparent meaning of *Shariah*. For if the apparent meaning of *Shariah* is searched, it will become evident from the revealed verses which inform us about the bringing into existence of the world (*Iejad-I-Aalim*) that its form really is created (*muhaditthatun*), but that the existence itself and time extend continuously at both extremes, i.e. without interruption. Thus the saying of Allah, the Exalted, 'He it is Who created the heavens and the earth in six days, and His throne was on the water', if taken in its external sense will imply that there was an existence before this present existence, that is namely the throne and the water, (*al-Arsh wal maa*) and a time before this water, i.e. the one which is joined to the form of this being, namely the number of the movement of the celestial sphere (*harakatul-Aflak*). And the saying of the Exalted, 'On the day when

the earth shall be changed into other than earth, and the heavens as well,' also indicate in their external sense that there will be a different existence (*wajudan thaniyan*) after this existence. (The same fact has been described) in the saying of the Exalted 'Then He directed Himself towards the sky, and it was smoke', which in its apparent sense implies that the heavens were created from something.

Thus the theologians too in their statements about the world do not conform to the external sense of the Divine law. But (the Scholastics) interpret it allegorically. For it is not stated in the Divine law that Allah was existing with absolutely nothing else (*al-Adm- al-Mahaz*): a text (*nass*) to this effect is never to be found. Then, how is it conceivable that the scholastics' allegorical interpretation (*tawil al-Mutakallimin*) of these verses could meet with unanimous consensus when the apparent meaning of the Divine law that we have mentioned about the existence of the world has been accepted by a school of philosophers! (*firqatun min al –hukama*). 21/

On such difficult questions (*al-Awaseyatun*), the people who make judgements are either correct, and entitled to reward (*musseebun maajurayn*) (from Allah) or wrong but excused (*mukhtein maazzurayn*). For judgement (*Tasdeeq*) to a thing from the side argument arising in the soul is something abiding (compulsory) and not voluntary.

I (Ibn Rushd) mean: it does not behoove us to endorse or not to endorse to choose, as it is to stand up or not to stand up. Now if it is a condition of obligation (*Sharat-ul-Takleefal-Ikhtiyar*), a man who endorses to an error as a result of an ambiguity occurring to him will be excused, if he is a scholar. This is why the Prophet (SAW) said, 'when the judge makes a personal judgement (*ijtihad)* and makes a right decision, he will have a double reward; and if he makes a wrong decision he will have a single reward.' And what judge is greater than he who makes judgements about existence i.e. to say thus or not thus is the case ?

These judges are the scholars (*ulama*), who have been specially chosen by Allah for allegorical interpretation (*tawil*), and this error which is forgivable according to the *Shariah* is only such error as occurs from scholars when they observe the difficult things (*al-Ashiah –awasebah*) for which the *Shariah* has made them obliged to observe.

So far the error proceeding from any other class of people is sheer sin (*ithmun mahazun*), equal whether the error relates to theoretical or to practical matters. For just as the judge who is ignorant of the way of the life of the prophet (*Sunnah*) cannot be absolved of the responsibility if he commits an error in judgement (*al-hukum*), so he who makes judgements about existents (*Maujudat*) without fulfilling the required conditions for making such judgements is not excused but is either a sinner or an unbeliever. And if he who would judge what is allowed and forbidden is required to combine in himself the prerequisites of personal judgment (*ijtihad*), which consists of knowledge of the principles [of the Divine law] and knowledge of how to draw inferences from those principles by reasoning, how much more properly is he who would make judgements about existents supposed to be meeting, i.e. to know the first rational principles and the modes to draw inferences from them!

In general, error in *Shariah* is of two types: it may either be an error which is excused to one who is from among the people of observation (*ahlul-al nazar*) (and the error may be) about that matter in which the error occurs, for example as the skilful doctor is excused if he commits an error in the art of medication and the mature judge if he errors in his judgment. However, commitment of error will be not excused to one who is not possessing expertise in that subject; or error which is not excused to any person whatever, and which is unbelief, if it takes place in the principles of the Divine law, and in case it occurs in something subordinate to the principles or fundamentals

will be a heresy.

This type of error is that which occurs about matters, knowledge of which is provided by all the different methods of arguments, so that knowledge of the matter in question is in this way possible for everyone. Examples are acknowledgement of Allah, Blessed and Exalted, of the prophetic offices and of salvation (*saadah*) and misery in the life hereafter. These three principles are amenable to the three classes of arguments through which everyone without exception can come to reach to an endorsement of what he is supposed to know: I mean the rhetorical (*khitabiah*), dialectical (*jadaliah*) and demonstrative (*burhaniah*) arguments. Therefore any person denying such examples, when these happen to be one of the principles of the *Shariah* (*Asool-i-Shariah*), is an unbeliever, who denies (*maanidin*) with his tongue though not with his heart, or becomes negligent to venture into learning the argument of its truth.

The reason for this being that if he belongs to the demonstrative class of men, he has to take recourse to argument for the endorsement of truth by demonstration as he has been made obliged to do the same; if he belongs to the dialectical class, the way is by dialectic; and if he belongs to the class of people who are to be addressed by sermonizing and admonishing (*al-Muaizatu*) the way for him is by sermonizing and admonishing. The Prophet (SAW) has alluded towards this dimension when he said, 'I have been ordered to fight people until they say "There is no Being entitled to be worshipped but Allah" and by believing in me'; he means attaining belief that is convenient to them by any of the three methods.

With regard to things which by reason of their hidden nature are only knowable by demonstration, Allah has opened His Gracious way in such matters for His servants who have no access to demonstration, on account of their observations (*nazrihim*), habits or unavailability of means

(adm–i-asbab) for education. He has cited for them examples (*amthal*) and similitude in these matters, and invited them to endorsement *(al-Tasdeeq)* with these examples, since it is possible for endorsement to those examples to materialize through the common arguments to all men, i.e. the dialectical and rhetorical arguments. This is the reason why *Shariah* is divided into esoteric and exoteric aspects: the exoteric aspect consists of those examples that are coined to stand for those connotations (images stand for ideas) while the esoteric aspect is those meanings [themselves], which are clear only to the demonstrative class. These are the four or five classes of existents mentioned by Abû Hamid in his 'The book of distinction' (*Al Tafaruqah*).

But when it occurs, as we said, that we know the thing itself by the three methods, we do not need to cite examples of it, and it remains true in its apparent meaning, not admitting interpretation (*tawil*). If an apparent text of this kind refers to principles (*al-asool*), in that case an interpreter who interprets it allegorically is an unbeliever, e.g. anyone who thinks that there is no salvation (*saadah*) or misery (*shaqawah*) in the next life, and that the only purpose of this statement is that men should be safeguarded from each other in their body and senses, in that sense it will be but a practical device, and that man has no other purpose than to enjoy his sensible existence.

When this is established, it will have become clear to you from what we have said that there are apparent texts of the Divine law that it is not permitted to interpret allegorically; to do so on fundamentals is unbelief (and) on subordinate matters it is heresy.

There are also apparent texts which have to be interpreted by men of the demonstrative class; for such men to take them in their apparent meaning is unbelief, while for those who are not of the demonstrative class to interpret them and take them out of their apparent

meaning is unbelief or heresy on their part.

Included in this kind of matters is the verse about Allah's settling on the Throne (*istiwa*) and the Tradition about His descent (*nazool*). That is why the Prophet (SAW) said in the case of the black woman (*suda*), when she informed the Prophet that Allah was in the heavens, 'Free her; for she is a believer'. This was because she was not of the demonstrative class (*ahlul-al –Burhan*); and the reason for his declaration was that the group of people to whom endorsement comes only through the imagination (*al-Takhayul*), i.e. who do not endorse a thing except in the way as they can imagine it, find it difficult to endorse the existence of a thing which is not related to any imaginable thing (*shayin mutakhayala*). This applies as well to those who do not understand from the relation stated except the Space (*makan*); these are people who have advanced a little distance and stage (*rutbata*) in their observation (*nazar*) beyond the position of the first class, (rejecting) their belief in corporeality (*al-jismiah*).

Thus the reply to them with regard to such examples is that they belong to the allegorical texts (*mutashabiyat*), and that the pause (*al-waqaf*) is to be placed after the words of Allah, the Exalted 'And no one knows the interpretation thereof except Allah'. The demonstrative class, while in full agreement with them in this hold that this may be interpreted allegorically, may disagree about the interpretation, depending on the level of each one's knowledge of demonstration.

There is also a third class of texts of the Divine law lying uncertainly between the other two classes, on which there is doubt. One group of those who devote themselves to exoteric observation (*al-Nazar-al-zahir*) attach them to the apparent texts which it is not permitted to interpret allegorically, others attach them to the texts with esoteric meanings which scholars are not permitted to take in their exoteric meanings. This divergence in the interpretation

is due to the difficulty and allegorical nature of the class of text itself. One who commits an error about this class is excused, I mean from among the scholars.22/

If it is said, 'when it is clear that the commandments of the Divine law in this regard are of three categories (*maratib*), to which of these three categories (*maratib*), according to you, do the attributes of the life hereafter and its states belong?' We respond: The position clearly is that this problem belongs to the third category about which there is disparity in opinion. We see a section of people (*quman*) who claim to be entitled to be among the people of demonstration say that it is necessary to consider these texts in their exoteric senses, as there was no possibility of demonstration which could lead to the impossibility (*istihalah*) of the apparent meaning in them. This is the manner which has been maintained by the Ash'arites. However, another group of those who devote themselves to demonstration interpret these texts allegorically, and these people are quite divergent in their interpretations of them. In this category of people must be included Abu Hamid and most of the Sufis; some of them attempt to bring affinity between the two interpretations of the texts, as Abû Hamid has done in some of his books.

So, it is quite possible that a scholar with an erroneous judgement in this matter is excused, while one who is correct receives thanks or a reward that is, if he acknowledges the possibility of physical existence [in the life hereafter] and provides a certain type of allegorical interpretation, I mean in the matters relating to the nature of eschatology (*al-Maad*), not of its occurrence, when the interpretation provided does not lead to denial of its occurrence (*wajud*). In this matter only the denial of its occurrence (*jahad-al-wajud*) will be tantamount to infidelity (*kufur*), because it constitutes of one principles of the fundamentals of the Divine law (*Asool-i-Shariah*) and one

of those ways to which endorsement is attainable through the three methods common to 'the white man and the black man'.

Now if anybody is from the non-scholarly people, then for him to practice on the apparent is necessary, and to interpret the text allegorically is an act of infidelity for such a person, as it may lead him to unbelief. Due to this reason we see for the people, for whom belief in the apparent is an obligation, it is a blasphemous act to indulge in an allegorical interpretation, as it may lead them to infidelity. Now, if any one amongst the people of demonstration divulges this to the others (the former ones), then he has invited them towards infidelity and the person who invites towards infidelity is himself an unbeliever.

That is why the interpretations are to be reservedly proved only in the books of demonstration, because when they are in the books of demonstration then, only those people will have access to them who comprise of the members of the category of demonstration. Now if these are found in other than the books of demonstration and in them are used imaginative, rhetorical, or dialectical methods as has been done by Abu Hamid, then he lapsed into an error both in religion and philosophy, even though the person had good intentions. For by this act he was desirous to increase the number of learned men (*Ahlil-al-llm*), but in fact he increased the number of the people who are prone to corruption and not learning!

The consequence of this situation was that one group came to slander (*thalib*) philosophy, another to abuse the Divine law (*Shariah)*, and another to reconcile these two groups. It seems that this was one of his objectives in his books; and the argument for this is that he wanted by this method to awaken the minds, thus he adhered to no one doctrine in his books but was an Ash'arite with the Ash'arites, a Sufi with the Sufis and a philosopher with

the philosophers, and he represented the person mentioned in the verse: -

'One day a Yamanite, if I happen to meet a man of Yemen,
And if I happen to meet a Maaddi, I'm an 'Adnani'.
23/

The Religious leaders (*aiyimatun*) of the Muslims are responsible for preventing people from consulting his books which abound in the scholarly contents (*al-ilm*), except the learned (*ahli-al-ilm*), just as they ought to forbid demonstrative books to those who are not capable of understanding them, though the damage done to the common people by demonstrative books is lighter, because in most cases only the persons endowed with superb natural prudence (*al-fitr-al-faiqah*) are attracted to the books falling in the demonstrative class, and this class of persons is only misled through lack of scholarly virtue (*Adm Fazilatil-al Ilmiyah*), unorganized reading, and tackling them without a teacher. However, their total attempt at prohibition obliterates the purpose to which the *Shariah* invites, because it is an injustice (*al-zulm*) to the best class of people and the best class of existences. For to do justice to the best class of existences demands that they should be known soundly, by persons qualified to know them profoundly; and these are the best class of people; and the greater the value of the existence, the greater will be the lapse (*al-jur*) on the part of people towards it, which consists of ignorance of it. Thus the Exalted has said, 'Associating [other gods] with Allah is indeed a great injustice'.

This is what we considered suitable to prove in this type of observation (*al-nazar*), i.e. the correspondence (*al-takalum*) between the Divine law (*Shariah*) and philosophy, and the commandments of allegorical interpretation in the Divine law. Had there been no publicity already given to this subject itself and to these questions among the

common masses, which we have mentioned, we should have been the last to write a word about it, and also we should not have had to seek apology in this matter from the people entitled to interpretation, as the status (*shan*) of these problems and questions is such that these should be discussed only in the books of demonstration (*kutub-al-Burhan*) and not elsewhere. Allah is the Guide and helps us to follow the right course!

You must know that the aim of the Divine law (*Shariah*) is simply to impart true knowledge (*taalim-al-haqq*) and righteous action (*al-aml-al-haqq*). (And) the True knowledge is gnosis of Allah (*Maatrifat-al-Allah*), Blessed and Exalted, and all other existents (*sayir al-Maujudat*) as they essentially happen to be, and the specific view point of *Shariah* pertaining to this issue, and knowledge of salvation (*saadah*) and wretchedness and misery (*al-Shiqa*) in the life hereafter. Righteous action consists in performing the activities (*al-afaal*), which are instrumental for making salvation possible and shunning the activities which bring wretchedness and misery to fore [in hereafter], and it is knowledge of all these activities that is called 'practical science' (*al-ilm al-amali*). As a whole these activities fall into two divisions: (1) outward physical activities; the science of these is named 'jurisprudence' (*fiqh*) and (2) activities of the soul such as gratitude, patience and other aspects of morality, attitudes towards which the *Shariah* has invited us or has forbidden us to go near them; the science of these is called 'asceticism' (*al-zuhud*) or 'the sciences of eschatology' (*ulum-al-akhrah*). On these Abû Hamid (Ghazzali) has dealt a great deal in his book: when the people had given up this sort [of act] and became immersed in the other sort (asceticism), and as this sort involved the greater fear of Allah (*taqwa*), which is the cause of salvation, he called his book 'The revival of the sciences of religion' (*Ahya Ulum al –Din).* But we have deviated from our subject,

so let us return to it

We say: The purpose of *Shariah* is to teach true knowledge (*taalim –al-ilm –al-haqq*) and right action (*al-amal-al-haqq*); and teaching consists of two kinds, i.e. concepts (*Tasawur*) and judgements (*Tasdeeq*), as the scholars of scholasticism have clarified. The methods of judgement available to men are three in number: demonstrative, dialectical and rhetorical, and the methods of forming concepts are two: either the object itself or an analogy of the object. All the people have not the natural ability to accept the demonstrations (*al-brahin*), and not even the capability of endorsing dialectical arguments, let alone demonstrative discourses (*aqawil)* 24/ which are so hard to learn and need a quite long period of time even for those who are qualified to learn them. Therefore, since the purpose of the Divine law is simply to teach everyone, it is necessary for it to consist of every mode of methods (*Inha-i-turq-al-Tasawwur*) and complete methods of judgment (*Inha-i-al-turq–al-Tasdeeq*). The methods of judgement are common for most of the people supporting the occurrence of their endorsement, i.e. the occurrence of assent, as a result of them [is comprehensive]: these are the rhetorical (*khitabiah*) and the dialectical (*jadaliyah*). The rhetorical are more common than dialectical. One of them occurs where the method is common, yet specialized in two respects: i.e. where it is certain in its concepts and judgements, in spite of being rhetorical or dialectical. These syllogisms are those premises, in spite of being based on accepted ideas or on opinions, are accidentally certain (*yaqeeniah*), and whose conclusions are accidentally to be taken in their direct meaning without analogies. The discourses of the Divine law (*Al-aqawil-al-shariah*) of this sort have no allegorical interpretations (*tawil*), and anyone who denies them or interprets them allegorically *(al-mutawil*) is an infidel.

The second sort occurs where the premises, in spite of

being based on well known (*mashurah*) ideas or on conjectural opinions (*madhunah*), are certain (*yaqeeniah*), and where the conclusions are analogies25/ for the matters they are intended to work as consequences, rendering these amenable i.e. their conclusions, to allegorical interpretation.

The third is the reverse of this: it occurs where the consequences are the very matters which it was intended to conclude, while the premises are based on well known notions or the conjectural opinions without being accidentally certain. The texts of this sort also, i.e. their conclusions, are not susceptible to allegorical interpretation (*Tawil*), but their premises may require it.

The fourth sort occurs where the premises are based on well known notions or conjectural opinions, without being accidentally certain, and where the consequences are analogies (*mithalat*) for what it was intended to conclude. In these cases the duty of the elite (*al-khawas*) is to resort to interpretation (*Tawil*) in their case, while the obligation of the masses (*al-jumhur*) is to take them in their apparent meaning.

In general, everything in these matters which renders allegorical interpretation necessary can only be comprehended by demonstration (*al-Burhan*). What is obligatory on the part of the elite (*al-khawas*) here is to apply such interpretation; while the duty of the masses is to take them in their apparent meaning in both the conditions, i.e. in concept (*al-tasawur*) and judgement (*al-tasdeeq*), since their natural capacity does not allow more than that.

Another method is peculiar to a smaller number of people: this is the demonstrative. Therefore, since the primary purpose of the Divine law is to take care of the majority, the prevailing methods of discourses in religion are the common methods by which the majority comes to form concepts and judgments. These [common] methods

in religion are of four classes: In general, everything in these [texts] that admits of interpretation (*al-Tawil*) can only be understood by demonstration (*burhan*). The duty of the elite (*al-khawas*) here is to resort to such interpretation; while the duty of the common people (*al-jumhur*) is to take them in their apparent meaning in both situations, i.e. in concept and judgement, since their natural capacity does not allow more than that.

But there may occur to students of *Shariah* interpretations due to the superiority of one of the common methods over another in [bringing about] endorsement (*al-Tasdeeq*), i.e. when the indication contained in the interpretation is more persuasive than the indication contained in the apparent meaning. Such interpretations are common; and their being obligatory is possibly a duty for those whose powers of theoretical comprehension have attained the dialectical capability (*al-quwatul-al-jadaliyah*). In this class belong some of the interpretations of the Ash'arites and Mu'tazilites-though the statements of the Mu'tazilites are generally more sound (*authaqa-aqwalan*). The common people, on the other hand, who are not capable of more than rhetorical discourses (*al-aqawil-al-khitabiyah*), have the duty of taking these in their apparent meaning, and they are not permitted to know such interpretations at all.

Thus people in relation to *Shariah* fall into three categories:

One category is those who are not people of interpretation at all: these are the people of rhetorical category. They are the overwhelming majority (*al-jumhur al-ghalib*), for no man of pure and chaste intelligence (*salim-al- aql*) is exempted from this kind of endorsement

Another category is of the people of dialectical interpretation (*ah-al-tawil-al-jadali*): these are the dialecticians (*jadaliyun*), either by their propensity (*bil-al-tabah*) alone or by nature and habit (*bil-al-tabah wal-al-*

¢aadah).

Another category of people is the people of certain interpretation (*al-tawil-al-Yaqeeni*): these are the people of demonstrative class, by nature and learning or training (*bil-al-tabah wal al-sanaat*), i.e. in the art of philosophy (*sanaat al-hikmah*). This sort of interpretation ought not to be explained to the people of dialectical category, let alone to the common masses. When something of these allegorical interpretations is explained to anyone who is not able to understand them -especially demonstrative interpretations (*al-tawilat-ul-al burhaniyah*) because of their lagging behind in common knowledge (*al-maarif-al-mushtarikah*) both he who explains it and he to whom it is explained led into unbelief. The reason for that is that he aims at two objectives. i.e. rejection of the apparent meaning and affirmation of the allegorical one; so that if the apparent meaning is rejected in the mind of someone who can only grasp apparent meanings, without the allegorical meaning being affirmed in his mind, the result is unbelief, if it concerns the fundamentals of the Divine law. Allegorical interpretations, then, ought not to be explained to the common masses nor stated in rhetorical or dialectical books, i.e. books containing discourses of these two kinds, as was done by Abû Hamid. For this reason they should not be explained to this class; and with regard to an apparent text, when there is a self-evident doubt whether it is apparent to everyone and whether knowledge of its interpretation is impossible for them, they should be informed clearly that it is allegorical (*mutashabiah*) and (its meaning) known by no one else than Allah; and that the pause (*al-waqf*) should be put here in the sentence of the Exalted, 'And no one knows the interpretation thereof except Allah'. The same kind of answer should also be given to a question about abstruse matters (*al-amur al-ghamizah*), which there is no way for the masses to comprehend; just as the Exalted has

answered in His saying, 'And they will ask you about the Spirit. Say: The Spirit is by the command of my Lord; you have been given only a little knowledge'.

As for the man (*al-musrih*) who explains these interpretations (*al-tawilat*) to the persons who are not entitled to these, he is an infidel on account of his calling people to unbelief. Because this is contrary to the calls of the prescribed legislation of the Legislator (*al-Sharah*), especially when they are far fetched false interpretations concerning the fundamentals of the Divine law, as has happened in the case of a section of people of our time. For we have witnessed some of them imagining that they were indulging in philosophizing and that they perceived, with their remarkable wisdom, things which conflict with the Divine law in every respect, i.e. (in passages) which do not admit of allegorical interpretation; and that it was obligatory to explain these things to the common masses.

But by explaining those false beliefs (*al-aiteqadati-al-fasidah*) to the common masses they have been instrumental in the destruction of the masses and themselves, in this world and the life hereafter.

The example of the relation between the purpose of these people and the purpose of the Legislator (*sharah*) can be understood by the following: Suppose there is a man, who goes to an expert physician (*tabib mahir*). The purpose of this expert physician is to preserve the health and treat the diseases of all the people, by prescribing for them prescriptions (*aqawil-i-mushtarikah*) which can be commonly endorsed, about the necessity of using the things which will preserve their health and cure their diseases, and avoiding the opposite things. He is unable to make them all physicians, because a physician is one who knows by demonstrative techniques (*bil-al-turq –al-burhaniah*) the things that preserve health and treat disease. Now suppose this man, whom we have

mentioned, goes out to the people and tells them, 'These techniques prescribed by this physician for you are not right'; and he starts discrediting them, so that they are rejected by the people. Or he says, 'They have various interpretations'; but the people neither understand these nor can endorsement be achieved by them in practice. Well, do you think that people in this condition will do any of the things which are useful for preserving health and curing disease, or that this man who has persuaded them to reject what they formerly believed in will now be able to use those (things) with them, I mean for preserving health? No, he will be not able to use those (things) with them, nor will they use them, and so they will all be led to perdition (*al-halak*).

This will happen to them if he expresses to them true interpretations (*tawilat-I-sahihah*) about those things, because of their inability to understand them; let alone if he explains to them false interpretations, because this will lead them to think that there are no such things as health which ought to be preserved and disease which ought to be treated -let alone that there are things which preserve health and cure disease. It is the same when someone explains interpretations to the common masses, and to those who are not qualified to understand them about the subtleties of the Divine law, thus such a person is corrupting them and turns people away from it; and he who turns people away from the Divine law (*Shariah*) is an unbeliever.

No doubt this analogy is certain, not just as imagery, as one may suppose. It presents a true analogy, in that the relation of the physician to the health of bodies (*sahat-ul-abdan*) is like the relation of the Law giver (*sharah*) to the health of souls (*sahatul-al-anfus*): i.e. the physician is he who seeks to preserve the health of bodies when it exists and to restore it when it is lost, while the Law giver works in the similar direction for the health of souls. This health

is what is called 'fear of Allah' (*Taqwa*). The Grand Book has told us to seek it by acts conformable to the Divine law, in several verses. Thus the Exalted has said, 'Fasting has been prescribed for you, as it was prescribed for those who were before you; perhaps you will fear Allah'. Again the Exalted has said, 'Their flesh and their blood shall not reach to Allah, but your fear shall'. 'Prayer prevents immorality and transgression'; and other verses to the same effect contained in the Grand Book. Through knowledge of the Divine law and practice according to the Divine law the Law-giver aims solely at this health; and it is from this health that salvation (*al-saadat- al-Ukhrayiyah*) in the life-here-after follows, just as wretchedness (*al-shiqa-ul-al-ukhrawi*) in the future life follows from its opposite.

From this it will be clear to you that right interpretations ought not to be mentioned in books meant for common masses (*al-kutub-al-jumhuriah*), not to talk about the false ones. The right interpretation (*al-tawil-al-sahih*) is the trust (*al-amanah*) which man was charged to hold and which he held, and from which all beings shied away, i.e. that which is mentioned in the words of the Exalted, 'We offered the trust to the heavens, the earth and the mountains', 26/ (and so on to the end of) the verse. It was due to interpretations-especially the false ones-and the supposition that such interpretations of the Divine law ought to be explained to everyone, that the sectarian divisions in the fold of Islam came to fore, with the result that each one accused the others of unbelief or heresy. Thus the Mu'tazilites interpreted many verses and Traditions allegorically, and explained their interpretations to the common masses, and the Ash'arites did the same, although they used such interpretations less frequently. As a consequence they were instrumental in making people to plunge people into schism, (*snaan*) hatred (*tabaghuz*), infighting, mutual detestation and wars

(*hurub*), tore the Divine law to shreds, and created unbridgeable gulf and divisions among them. In addition to all this, in the methods which they followed to establish their interpretations they neither went along with the common masses nor with the elite: not with the masses, because their methods were more obscure than the methods common to the majority, and not with the elite, because if these methods are inspected they are found deficient in the conditions required for demonstration, as will be understood after the slightest inspection by anyone acquainted with the conditions of demonstration. Further, many of the principles on which the Ash'arites based their knowledge are sophistical, for they deny many necessary truths (*Al-Zaruriyat*) such as the proofs of accidents (*thabut-al-aaraz*), the action of things on other things, the existence of necessary causes for effects, of substantial forms (*al-saur-al-jauhariyah*), and of secondary causes. And their theorists wronged the Muslims in this sense, that a sect of Ash'arites dubbed an anyone an unbeliever who did not attain knowledge of the existence of the Initiator of Creation (*wajud-Al-Bari*) by the methods laid down by them in their books for attaining this knowledge. But in truth, it is they who are the unbelievers and the people who have gone astray! From this point they proceeded to disagree, one group saying 'The primary obligation is theoretical study (*al-wajibat-al-nazar*)', another group saying 'It is belief'; i.e. because they did not know which are the methods common to everyone, through whose doors the Divine law has summoned all people to have their entry; they supposed that there was only one method. Thus they misunderstood the purpose of the Lawgiver (*sharah*), and were both themselves led to misguidance and led others into error.

If it is asked, 'If these methods followed by the Ash'arites and other people of vision (*ahl-al-nazar*) are not the common methods by which the Lawgiver (*Qasad-al-*

Sharah) has aimed to teach the common masses, and by which alone it is possible to teach them, then what are those methods in this Divine law of ours'? We reply: They are the methods set down in the Grand Book. For if the Grand Book is inspected, there will be found in it the three methods that are available for all the people, namely the common methods for the instruction of the majority of the people and the specific method. And if their command is considered, it becomes clear that no better common methods for the education of the common masses can be found than the methods mentioned in it.

Thus whosoever changes them, by indulging in an interpretation which is not apparently warranted, or not more apparent to everyone than they are and that rejecting their wisdom and rejecting their intended effects in procuring human salvation (*Saadat-al-insaniyah*). This is very evident from the condition of the believers of the first Islamic century (*al-sadar-al-awal*) with the condition of those who came after them. For the first believers arrived at complete virtue (*al-fazilat-al-kamilah*) and fear of Allah only by using these discourses (of the Divine law) in comparison to interpreting them allegorically; and anyone of them who did find out an interpretation did not think fit to explain it.

But when those who came after them used interpretation, their fear of Allah started decreasing, and their schisms and differences increased, their love for one another started vanishing, and they became divided into sectarian factions.

Therefore, whosoever intends to take away this innovation (*bidah*) from the Divine law should direct his attention to the Grand Book, and acquire from it the arguments concerning everything in turn that it obliges us to believe, and should exercise his level best for reaching a judgment in looking at its apparent meaning as well as he is able, without interpreting any of it, except

where the allegorical meaning is apparent in itself, i.e. commonly apparent to everyone. For if the discourses laid down in the Divine law for the education of the people are considered, it seems that in mastering their meaning one arrives at an end, beyond which none but a man of the demonstrative class (*ahl-al-burhan*) can extract from their apparent wording a meaning which is not apparent in them. This special property is not found in any other discourse.

For those religious sayings in the Grand Book which are explained to everyone have three salient characteristics (*khawas*) that give an indication about their inimitable nature (*aijaz*). (1) There exist none more perfectly self sufficient and convincing to everyone than they. (2) Their meaning admits naturally of mastery, up to a point beyond which their interpretation (when they are of a kind to have such an interpretation) can only be found out by the demonstrative class. (3) They contain admonition (al-tanbih) for the people of truth to arrive at the true interpretation. This specialty is not found in the doctrines of the Ash'arites nor in those of the Mu'tazilites, i.e. their interpretations do not admit of triumph (*al-nusrat*) nor contain the elements of admonition (*al-tanbih*) drawing attention to the truth, nor are they true; and this is why innovations (*al-bidah*) have been abundant. It is our desire to be able to devote our time to this objective and achieve it effectively, and if Allah grants us a respite of life we shall move steadily towards it in order to establish it in so far as this is made easy for us; and it may be that that work will serve as a starting point (*mubdaa'*) for those who come after us. For our soul is in the utmost sorrow and pain by reason of the evil desires and carnal infatuations (*al-ahwa-al-fasidah*) and deviated beliefs (*al-aitiqadat-al-muharifah*) that have entered into the Divine law, and particularly such (afflictions) as have happened to it at the hands of people who claim an affinity with

philosophy. For injuries from a friend are more severe than injuries from an enemy. I refer to the fact that philosophy is the friend and foster -sister of the Divine law; thus injuries from people related to philosophy are the severest injuries (to the Divine law), apart from the animosity, hatred and quarrels which incur between the two, which are colleagues (*al-mustabatan bil-tabaḉh*) by nature and lovers by substances (*al-mutahaban –bil-jauhar*) and propensity (*Al-Ghazeerah*). It has also been injured by a host of ignorant friends (*al-asdiqiyah-al-Juhal*) who claim an affinity with it: these are the sects that exist within it. But Allah directs all men aright and helps everyone to love Him; He unites their hearts in the fear of Him, and sheds from their hearts hatred and loathing by His grace and His mercy!

Certainly Allah has already lifted many of these evils (*al-sharur*), ignorant traits (*al-jahalat*) and misleading practices (*masalik-al-muzzilat*), by means of this triumphant ordinance (*al-amr-al-ghalib*). By it Allah has opened a way to many benefits (*al-khayrat*), especially to the class of people who have trodden the path of observation (*maslakul-al-nazar*) and were enthusiastic to the knowledge of the truth. This was made possible by summoning the common masses to a middle path (*tariq-I-wast*) of knowing Allah, the Glorious, a path which is elevated above the low level of the followers (*hazizil-al-muqqaladdin*) of authority, but is below the turbulence (*tashgheeb*) of the scholastics; and by admonitions of the elite (*nabh-ul-al-khawas*) to their obligation to resort to a thorough observation (*al-nazar*) of the fundamentals of the Divine law. Allah is the Giver of success and the Guide by His Goodness.

APPENDIX-I

THE QUESTION MENTIONED BY THE *SHAYKH* ABÛL-WALID IN *THE DECISIVE TREATISE*

May Allah prolong your grandeur and make your blessedness enduring, and preserve you from the piercing eye of misfortunes! By the superiority of your rational understanding and the magnanimity of your nature, you have surpassed many of those who devote their lives to these subjects, and your unadulterated insight (*nazarakum al-sadid*) has led you to become aware of the skepticism that arises about the eternal, Glorious Knowledge,' on account of Its being connected with the things created by It. It is therefore our obligation, in the interests of truth and of ending your skepticism, to resolve this suspicion, after formulating it; for he who does not know how to tie a knot cannot untie it.

The skepticism makes the following necessary. If all these things were in the Knowledge of Allah, the Sanctified and Purified before they existed, are they in their condition of existence, the same, in His Knowledge as they were before their existence, or are they in their condition of existence, which is other in His Knowledge than they were before they existed? If we say that in their condition of existence they are other in Allah's Knowledge than they were before they existed, it follows that the

eternal Knowledge (*al-ilm-al-qadeem*) is amenable to change, and that when they pass from nothingness *(al-adam)* to existence, there appears into existence additional Knowledge (*ilmun zaydun*): but that is imcomapatable *(mustaheel)* with the eternal Knowledge. If on the other hand we say that the Knowledge of them in both conditions similar, it will be said, 'Are they in themselves', i.e. the existents which come into existence, 'the same before they exist as when they exist?' The answer will have to be 'No, in themselves they are not the same before they exist as when they exist'; otherwise the existence and nothing ness (*al-maujud wal-al-maudum*) would be one and the same. If the opponent *(al-khasam)* concedes to this, he can be asked, 'Is not true knowledge (*al-ilm-al-haqeeqi)* knowledge of the existence as it really is (*maarifat-al-wajud*)?'In case he says 'Yes', it will be said, 'Consequently if the object changes in itself, the knowledge of it must also vary; otherwise it will not be known as it really is'. In this case one of two options (*amrein*) is necessary: either the eternal Knowledge varies in itself, or the things that come into existence are not known to it. But both matters are impossible for Allah the Sanctified and purified.

This skepticism (*al-shakk*) is manifested (ma yuzhiru) in the state of man: I mean his knowledge of non-existent things depends on the supposition of existence (*taqdeer-al-wajud*), while his knowledge of them when they are found in existence depends on existence itself. Because it is self-evident (*al-bayin binafisihi*) that the two states of knowledge are different; otherwise he would be ignorant of things' existence at the time when they exist.

It is impossible to avoid this difficulty by the usual answer of the scholastics *(mutakalimmun)* about it, that Allah, the Exalted knows things before their existence as they will be at the time of their existence, in respect of time, space and other attributes which exist with an existent and are also proper to each being. For it can be

said to them: 'Then when they come to exist, does there occur any change or not?'-Which in other words indicates the passage of the thing from non-existence to existence. If they say 'No change occurs', they are merely being supercilious (*kabaroo*). But if they say 'There does occur a change', it can be said to them: 'Then is the occurrence (*al-haduth*) of this change known to the eternal Knowledge or not?' Thus the earlier (*al-mutaqadam*) skepticism becomes compelling. In short, it can hardly be conceived that the knowledge of a thing before it exists can be identical with the knowledge of it after it exists. Such, then, is the formulation of this skepticism in its strongest possible form, as we have explained it to you in conversation.

The complete resolution of this skepticism would demand a lengthy discussion (*kalaman tawilan*); but here we intend to go into the decisive point (nukhtatu) of the solution. Abû Hamid (Ghazzali) in his book entitled The Rebuttal *[Tahafut –al-Falasifah]* wanted to resolve this difficulty in a way which does not seem carrying any conviction. He made a statement, the gist of which is as follows. He asserted that knowledge and the object known are related; and as one of two related things may change without the other changing in itself, this is just what seems to happen to things in the Knowledge of Allah, The Sanctified and Purified: they change in themselves, but the Knowledge of Allah, the Sanctified and purified, about them does not change. A parallel case of related things would be if a single column were first on the right of Zayd and then came to be on his left: meanwhile Zayd would not have changed in himself. But this argument is not correct. For the relation has changed in itself: the relation which was a right-handed one has become a left-handed one, and the only thing which has not changed is the subject of the relation, i.e. its bearer, Zayd. If this is so, and knowledge is the relation itself, it must necessarily

change when the object known changes, just as, when the column changes, the relation of the column to Zayd changes, coming to be a left-handed relation after having been a right-handed one.

The way to resolve this skepticism, in our view, is to recognize that the position of the eternal Knowledge (*al-ilm-al-qadeem*) with respect to existents is different from the position of originated knowledge with respect to beings, in that the existence of beings is a cause and reason for our knowledge, while the eternal Knowledge is a cause and reason for beings. If, when beings come to exist after not having existed, there occurred an addition in the eternal Knowledge such as occurs in originated knowledge, it would follow that the eternal Knowledge (*al-ilm al-qadeem*) would be an effect of beings, not their cause. Therefore there must not occur any change such as occurs in originated knowledge (*al-ilm al-muhadith*). The mistake (*al-ghalat*) in this matter has arisen simply from making an analogy between the eternal Knowledge and originated knowledge, i.e. between the supersensible and the sensible; or to make analogy of the unseen (*qiyas-al-ghayib)* on the present (*al-shahid*), and the falsity of this analogy is well known. Just as no change occurs in an agent when his act comes into being, i.e. no change which has not already occurred, so no change occurs in the eternal Glorious Knowledge when the object of Its Knowledge results from It.

Thus the skepticism is resolved, and we do no, have to admit that if there occurs no change, i.e. in the eternal Knowledge, He does not know beings at the time of their coming into existence just as they are; we only have to admit that He does not know them with originated knowledge but with eternal Knowledge.

For the occurrence of change in knowledge when existents change is a condition only of knowledge that is caused by beings, i.e. originated knowledge.

Therefore eternal Knowledge is only connected with existents in a manner other than that in which originated knowledge is connected with them. This does not mean that it is not connected at all, as the philosophers have been accused of saying, in the context of this difficulty, that the Glorious One does not know particulars. Their position is not what has been imputed to them; rather they hold that He does not know particulars with originated knowledge, the occurrence of which is conditioned by their occurrence, since He is a cause of them, not caused by them as originated knowledge is. This is the furthest extent to which purification ought to be admitted.

Since the demonstration necessitates the conclusion that He knows things, because their issuing from Him is solely due to His knowing; it is not due to His being merely Existent or Existent with a certain attribute, but to His knowing, as the Exalted has said: 'Does He not know, He who created? He is the Penetrating, the Omniscient! But demonstration also compels the conclusion that He does not know things with knowledge of the same character as originated knowledge. Therefore there must be another knowledge of beings which is unqualified, the eternal Glorious Knowledge. And how is it conceivable that the Peripatetic philosophers (*al-hukama*) could have held that the eternal Knowledge does not comprehend particulars, when they held that It is the cause of warning in dreams, of revelation, and of other kinds of inspiration?

This is the way to resolve this skepticism, as it appears to us; and what has been said is incontestable and indubitable. It is Allah, who helps us to follow the right course and directs us to the truth. Peace on you, with the mercy and blessings of Allah.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1-Hourani has translated 'Mojudaat' as 'beings' which is not the complete translation of this term, which includes all the existing things not only animate ones but inanimate too .See Ibn Manzur, *Lisan al-Arab*, Dar Sadir, Beirut, vol. 111,1997, pp. 445-446 and also William Thomson Wortabet, Wortabet's Arabic –English Dictionary, Librairie du Liban, Beirut 1977, pp. 748-749

2-Jamilur Rehman translates it as - "It is obvious that the observation that the Law approves and encourages must be of the most perfect type".

3-*Tafaquh* is an Arabic term which deals with the extraction and application of Divine commandments according to the demands of times or circumstances.

4- *Ahkam* are the commandments found in the Quran or the Sunnah of the Prophet (saw)

5-Jamil al-Rehman: -"One cannot maintain that this kind of reasoning is an innovation in religion because it did not exist in the early days of Islam. For legal reasoning and its kinds are things which were invented also in later ages and no one thinks they are innovations. Such should also be our attitude towards philosophical reasoning." Hourani: - "It cannot be objected: 'This kind of study of intellectual reasoning is a heretical innovation since it did not exist among the first believers.' For the study of legal reasoning and its kinds is also something, which has, been discovered since the first believers, yet it is not considered to be a heretical innovation. So, the objector should believe the same about the study of intellectual reasoning."

6- Jamil ur Rehman : "A large number of the followers of this religion confirm philosophical reasoning, all except a small worthless minority, who argue from religious ordinances.

Hourani: - "But most (masters) of this religion support intellectual reasoning, except a small group of gross

literalists, who can be refuted by [sacred] texts."

7-. Jamilur Rehman: -"Now, such is the case. All that is wanted in an enquiry into philosophical reasoning has already been perfectly examined by the Ancients. All that is required of us is that we should go back to their books and see what they have said in this connection. If all that they say be true, we should accept it and if there be something wrong, we should be warned by it. Thus, when we have finished this kind of research we shall have acquired instruments by which we can observe the universe, and consider its general character. For so long as one does not know its general character one cannot know the created, and so long as he does not know the created, he cannot know its nature".

Hourani: - "So if such is the case, and everything that is required in the study of the subject of intellectual syllogisms has already been examined in the most perfect manner by the ancients, presumably we ought to lay hands on their books in order to study what they said about that subject; and if it is all correct we should accept it from them, while if there is anything incorrect in it, we should draw attention to that."

8-Hourani: - "geometry".

9- i.e. these branches of knowledge were also not present from the beginning but were compiled by people at a later date. (HNR)

10-. Jamiulur Rahman: -"Now, such is the case. All that is wanted in an enquiry into philosophical reasoning has already been perfectly examined by the Ancients. All that is required of us is that we should go back to their books and see what they have said in this connection. If all that they say be true, we should accept it and if there be something wrong, we should be warned by it. Thus, when we have finished this kind of research we shall have acquired instruments by which we can observe the universe, and consider its general character. For so long

as one does not know its general character one cannot know the created, and so long as he does not know the created, he cannot know its nature."

George Hourani: - "If this is so, then whenever we find in the works of our predecessors of former nations a theory about beings and a reflection on them conforming to what the conditions of demonstration require, we ought to study what they said about the matter and what they affirmed in their books. And then should accept from them gladly and gratefully whatever in these books accords with the truth, and draw attention to and warn against what does not accord with the truth, at the same time excusing them."

11-Hourani: -"For every Muslim the Law has provided a way to truth suitable to his nature, through demonstrative, dialectical or rhetorical methods.

Since all this is now established, and since we, the Muslim community, hold that this divine religion of ours is true, and that it is this religion which incites and summons us to the happiness that consists in the knowledge of God, Mighty and Majestic, and of His creation, that [end] is appointed for every Muslim by the method of assent which his temperament and nature requires. For the natures of men are on different levels with respect to [their paths to] assent. One of them comes to assent through demonstration; another comes to assent through dialectical arguments, just as firmly as the demonstrative man through demonstration, since his nature does not contain any greater capacity; while another comes to assent through rhetorical arguments, again just as firmly as the demonstrative man through demonstrative arguments."

12— Hourani: -"We can even say that a man who prevents a qualified person from studying books of philosophy, because some of the most vicious people may be thought to have gone astray through their study of

them, it is like a man who prevents a thirsty person from drinking cool, fresh water until he dies of thirst, because some people have choked to death on it. For death from water by choking is an accidental matter, but death by thirst is essential and necessary.

Moreover, this accidental effect of this art is a thing, which may also occur accidentally from the other arts. To how many lawyers has law been a cause of lack of piety and immersion in this world! Indeed we find most lawyers in this state, although their art by its essence calls for nothing but practical virtue. Thus it is not strange if the same thing that occurs accidentally in the art which calls for practical virtue should occur accidentally in the art which calls for intellectual virtue.

If the apparent meaning of Scripture conflicts with demonstrative conclusions it must be interpreted allegorically, i.e. metaphorically.

If there is agreement between the demonstrative observation and the Divine law, well and good but in the case of opposition we feel the need of elucidation which means we will try to create a comparison between the Divine law and the ingredient of reason. Here the meaning of elucidation is to interfere with its real indication and towards its metaphorical evidence and to apply it in this manner so that in its practice there is no transgression in the practice of the language of the Arab people and the interpretation; secondly, the interpretation is not formerly resorted to for some other interpretation that is either in both topics there is an adherent need to find similitude."

13-Hourani: - "For every Muslim the Law has provided a way to truth suitable to his nature, through demonstrative, dialectical or rhetorical methods.

Since all this is now established, and since we, the Muslim community, hold that this divine religion of ours is true, and that it is this religion which incites and summons us to the happiness that consists in the

knowledge of God, Mighty and Majestic, and of His creation, that [end] is appointed for every Muslim by the method of assent which his temperament and nature require. For the natures of men are on different levels with respect to [their paths to] assent. One of them comes to assent through demonstration; another comes to assent through dialectical arguments, just as firmly as the demonstrative man through demonstration, since his nature does not contain any greater capacity; while another comes to assent through rhetorical arguments, again just as firmly as the demonstrative man through demonstrative arguments.

14- Hourani: - "So we affirm definitely that whenever the conclusion of a demonstration is in conflict with the apparent meaning of Shariah, that apparent meaning admits of allegorical interpretation according to the rules for such interpretation in Arabic. This proposition is questioned by no Muslim and doubted by no believer. But its certainty is immensely increased for those who have had close dealings with this idea and put it to the test, and made it their aim to reconcile the assertions of intellect and tradition. Indeed we may say that whenever a statement in Scripture conflicts in its apparent meaning with a conclusion of demonstration, if Scripture is considered carefully, and the rest of its contents searched page by page, there will invariably be found among the expressions of Scripture something which in its apparent meaning bears witness to that allegorical interpretation or comes close to bearing witness."

15-Hourani has translated *'Rasikhoon fil Ilm'* as 'learned' and *'al-Twail Al–Jamih* as 'deeper study', which is not an accurate English rendering of these terms. (HNR)

16-Hourani: -"Ghâzâli's charge of unbelief against Fârâbî and Ibn Sinâ, for asserting the world's eternity and God's ignorance of particulars and denying bodily resurrection, is only tentative, not definite.

You may object: 'If we ought not to call a man an unbeliever for violating unanimity in cases of allegorical interpretation, because no unanimity is conceivable in such cases, what do you say about the Muslim philosophers, like Abû Nasr.... and Ibn Sinâ? For Abû Hamid called them both definitely unbelievers in the book of his known as The disintegration [Tahfut],.. on three counts: their assertions of the pre-eternity of the world and that God the Exalted does not know particulars' (may He be Exalted far above that [ignorance]!), 'and their allegorical interpretation of the passages concerning the resurrection of bodies and states of existence in the next life.'

We answer: It is apparent from what he said on the subject that his calling them both unbelievers on these counts was not definite, since he made it clear in The book of the distinction that calling people unbelievers for violating unanimity can only be tentative.]

17-Hourani:-"Such a charge cannot be definite, because there has never been a consensus against allegorical interpretation. The Qur'an itself indicates that it has inner meanings which it is the special function of the demonstrative class to understand.]

[Moreover, it is evident from what we have said that a unanimous agreement cannot be established in questions of this kind, because of the reports that many of the early believers of the first generation, as well as others, have said that there are allegorical interpretations which ought not to be expressed except to those who are qualified to receive allegories. These are 'those who are well grounded in science'; for we prefer to place the stop after the words of God the Exalted 'and those who are well grounded in science', because if the scholars did not understand allegorical interpretation, there would be no superiority in their assent which would oblige them to a belief in Him not found among the unlearned. God has

described them as those who believe in Him, and this can only be taken to refer to the belief, which is based on demonstration; and this [belief] only occurs together with the science of allegorical interpretation."]

18-Hourani: -"On the question of the world, the ancient philosophers agree with the *Ash'arites* that it is originated and coeval with time. The Peripatetic only disagree with the Ash'arites and the Platonists in holding that past time is infinite. This difference is insufficient to justify a charge of unbelief.] 99

[Anyhow, the apparent meaning of Scripture is that there was a being and time before God created the present being and time. Thus the theologians' interpretation is allegorical and does not command unanimous agreement.]

19-Hourani: - "The class of being which is between these two extremes is that which is not made from anything and not preceded by time, but which is brought into existence by something, i.e. by an agent."

20- Hourani: - "Anyhow, the apparent meaning of Scripture is that there was a being and time before God created the present being and time. Thus the theologians' interpretation is allegorical and does not command unanimous agreement."

21-The statement of Ibn Rushd that Allah was existing with absolutely something else with Him is rejected by a tradition of the Prophet (SAW) which mentions that Allah was there when nothing else was existing with Him.(HNR)

22- Hourani says that the texts about the future life fall into the third category (texts falling between the other two), since demonstrative scholars do not agree whether to take them in their apparent meaning or interpret them allegorically. Either is permissible. But it is inexcusable to deny the fact of a future life altogether.

23-Hourani: -"But anyone who is not a man of learning is obliged to take these passages in their apparent meaning, and allegorical interpretation of them is for him unbelief because it leads to unbelief. That is why we hold that, for anyone whose duty it is to believe in the apparent meaning, allegorical interpretation is unbelief, because it leads to unbelief. Anyone of the interpretative class who discloses such [an interpretation] to him is summoning him to unbelief, and he who summons to unbelief is an unbeliever.

Therefore allegorical interpretations ought to be set down only in demonstrative books, because if they are in demonstrative books no one encounters them but men of the demonstrative class. But if they are set down in other than demonstrative books and one deals with them by poetical, rhetorical or dialectical methods, as Abû Hamid does, then he commits an offence against the Law and against philosophy, even though the fellow intended nothing but good. For by this procedure he wanted to increase the number of learned men, but in fact he increased the number of the corrupted not of the learned! As a result, one group came to slander philosophy, another to slander religion, and another to reconcile the [first] two [groups]. It seems that this [last] was one of his objects in his books; an indication that he wanted by this [procedure] to arouse minds is that he adhered to no one doctrine in his books but was an Ash'arite with the Ash'arites, a Sufi with the Sufis and a philosopher with the philosophers, so that he was like the man in the verse

'One day a Yamani, if I meet a man of Yaman,
And if I meet a Ma'addi, I'm an 'Adnani."

24-And not 'demonstrative arguments' as translated by Hourani, because for arguments the term *hujaj* is more appropriate.

25-And not the symbols as translated by Hourani.

According to Aristotelian logic, demonstrative proof

that affords nescssary, absolute truth must be distinguished from dialectical and rhetorical proofs that only yield probability. The term *Tasdeeqh* is a taranslation of the Stoic term, assent, and it is synonymous with *Tahqeeqh*, but whereas for the Stoics assent may be given to the single representation, for the Aristotelian logicians in Islam, assent refers always to a proposition. The Arabs divide logic into two parts, the one treating of concepts, tasawwur, the other of judgements in so far as they refer to the exterior world, Tasdeeqh, and c.f. Avicenna, *Salvation*, ed.H.1331, P-3, see Van Den Bergh, op.cit. Vol.11, p-1

26-Hourani has translated *Amanah* as deposit that is not the correct rendering of the term.